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### **Do Private Fee-for-Service Plans Cut Access?**

**By Larry Lipman |**

The same week that Medicare officials held a dog-and-pony show for reporters to extol the virtues of Medicare private fee-for-service plans, the Center for Medicare Advocacy has issued a report slamming the program.

“Medicare-participating providers are permitted to refuse to treat PFFS enrollees, so beneficiaries’ access to services may not be as broad as the plans assert,” the report said.

The report also asserts that private fee-for-service enrollees “have experienced difficulty finding doctors who will treat them. Moreover, whether a PFFS plan offers services identical to those provided under traditional Medicare or covers additional services as well, there is no limit on the premium the plan can charge beneficiaries in addition to the Part B premium.”

Medicare officials argue that the private plans provide extra benefits — at a higher cost to the government — than the traditional Medicare-administered fee-for-service program.